THE WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT

For International Socialism.

VOL. VI.—No. 23. SATURDAY, AUGUST 30th, 1919. PRICE TWOPENCE.

The Miners' Solution of the Coal Question.

The South Wales Socialist Society, a body almost wholly composed of working miners, has published, as a sequel to the now famous "Miners' Next Step," a scheme for the nationalisation of the mining industry.* "This pamphlet, we are told, "is not the work of any one man, but the considered conclusions of a large body of working miners." The miners who have produced the scheme desire a form of nationalisation which shall reduce their hours of labour, make their work more congenial and less arduous, raise their standard of living, give them control of their conditions, and a higher social status. The various proposals to nationalise the mines and to administer them by means of a Ministry controlled by Parliament, they regard as schemes for nationalising the miners, together with the mines. They say that the difference to the miner between being exploited by the coal owners or the State is a "minute" one. Joint control with the State, they say, "would force us into the illogical position of fighting against our own control, while for obvious reasons, control with the State offers an alluring prospect to the 'leaders'; to the working miner it is simply a change of masters." Profit-sharing the writers dismiss as simply an invitation to the miner "to assist in robbing himelf of a proportion of his wage in order to receive back a fraction of this robbery as a share of the profits."

The South Wales Socialist Society's scheme proposes to extinguish Royalties, no compensation to be paid beyond compassionate grants to Royalty owners who might be reduced to poverty thereby. Mine owners, on the other hand, it is proposed to buy out, the inflated value of shares due to high dividends being deflated to their net capital value. This concession to the mine owner is made "in order to effect, if possible, a peaceful solution to the industrial problem." It is proposed to pay interest on the capital invested until it has been re-paid. The tone of the pamphlet is one of cheerful optimism throughout. Say the writers: "It is true that this happy result would probably have, as its concomitant, a continuous wail from the expropriated Royalty and bought-out coal owner, but the nation would doubtless bear this with equanimity. Indeed, if the worst came to the worst, the coal and Royalty owners could work in the mining industry." Perhaps it is purposely that the writers ignore the certainty that the coal owners will refuse to surrender their possessions without a tremendous struggle.

CONTROL.

The following diagram gives the skeleton of the proposed machinery for controlling the industry:—

COAL CONTROLLER

Controller of selling prices and distribution home and abroad would make demands on the Mining Industry through:—

THE M.F.G.B. EXECUTIVE

Which would allot—on a productional capacity and qualitative basis—the *pro rata* demands to

THE LOCAL AREA EXECUTIVES

English Federated Area.	Scotland.	South Wales.
Lancashire and Cheshire.	Northumberland and Durham.	

Who would apportion their order on the above basis to

THE COLLIERY LODGE

Who in turn would hand on their order to their administrative body

THE COLLIERY COMMITTEE

Who would be responsible for the actual production to the Lodge. And who would make all necessary adjustments through its—

PIT COMMITTEES

Which would be responsible for the safe and efficient working of each particular pit.

It is proposed that "the State should own on behalf of the nation, and through its appointed Minister or Controller, should make certain demands for supply upon the mining industry; the workmen should make their own dispositions to meet this demand, and to supply estimates of possible increase or decrease, entailed by the conditions of the mines."

*"Industrial Democracy for Miners. A Plea for the Democratic Control of the Mining Industry." Price 3d., from D. A. Davis, 38, Cemetary-road, Porth, Rhondda Valley, South Wales, or the W.S.F., 400, Old Ford-road, London, E.3.

(Continued on next page)

A PEASANT WOMAN SPEAKS.

Just lately there appeared in the "Times" a series of articles on the effect of Bolshevism in Russia, written presumably by an officer of the Tsar's army, and most certainly by an enemy of Bolshevism. In the same paper was published the announcement of a new democratic Government formed under the auspices of the British authorities in Reval, with a Russian financier, Lianozoff, as president.

Being a mere woman, I fail to see why a Russian financier should be deemed democratic, or why the longings of an old régime officer for the re-establishment of the old order of things should be permitted to pass as the wish of the whole of Russia. But, trusting to the fairness of the British public, I beg them to allow me, a true daughter of the Russian working class, to show them how things look from my point of view.

I cannot treat the articles in question as fully as I should like, owing to lack of time, since I have to work for 13 hours a day for my living, and also to lack of regular education, of which the writer of the above articles is in full possession. But I hope the last circumstance will not make my remarks unwelcome to my English working sisters. It is chiefly to them I wish to speak now.

In this dreadful nest of Bolshevism—Russia—we are told by the eminent writer of the articles, there are no servants, and women must do their domestic work themselves before they go to the offices or factories. Just imagine the full horror of it! Perhaps the writer's wife even was obliged to scrub her floors before she left for her 6 hours' office work. In free England you have nothing of the kind, of course! An official record published in 1916 admits that there are some few hundreds of thousands of British women who have easy jobs playing about in the Government factories for 9 or 10 hours a day. I wonder who does their domestic work? Perhaps they all have servants? The record does not say.

The author of the articles asserts, I hope not from his personal experience, that women in Russia are made common property. This is rather vague. Does he mean that any young and pretty woman, putting plain ones aside, can be claimed by any man who takes a fancy to her or that she can give her affections freely owing to the simplified divorce process? I have quite a number of young and pretty women friends in Petrograd of all classes, and some of them have complained that there are very few gentlemen left who appreciate the refined art of flirting, because so many of them crossed over to England, owing, no doubt, to their disinclination to work or to fight in Russia and for Russia.

Let us see what other things make Bolshevism a horror—since the gentleman himself is quite willing to put aside the so-called atrocities of Soviet servants. The next thing is that women in Petrograd are all compelled to work for the Soviets, otherwise they cannot get a living. Now, just think of the real freedom you English women enjoy: think of it and appreciate it! You are not compelled to work for the Government—quite the contrary, you are advised by your labour exchanges to accept positions as domestic servants and hotel and restaurant servants, if you are obliged to get your living. I am not going to enlarge on the advantages of these two professions; all the world knows and none better than yourselves, what a slavery is the life of a freeborn English woman who has no other choice but to accept a living-in post.

Soviet Russia requires 8 hours out of your 24—and sometimes 6, if it is office work; your British mistress requires all your time, from getting up to going to bed. Even in the night you cannot snatch a moment to yourself; you must put out the light and go to sleep, or you will be unfit for to-morrow's slavery. But you are quite free to accept it or not, you know. I hope you can realise now how very dreadful it is for a lady—what they call "a real lady" in England—to be given no other choice—work for the good of the community for, say, 6 hours a day or starve. And perhaps she has never done a stroke of work in her life before, too! Oh, let us pass on to something else; this is too cruel to dwell upon!

The "Times" writer says that women in Petrograd are badly clad, their rations are those of starvation; men are fighting and women have all the burden of keeping life going, added to those of an ordinary women's life. Yes, this sounds grave, this sounds as

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MARS, NEPTUNE & CO. BUTCHERS.
Mr David L. Lloyd George
To One Hundred and Eleven
£7,000,000,000
1919
INJURED INNOCENT "LOOK HERE! THIS WAR'S BEEN COSTING EVER SUCH A LOT OF MONEY. WHY WASN'T I TOLD?"

THE BATTLE OF THE BALTIC.
A BLOT ON THE FLAG.
See Page 1448.

A PEASANT WOMAN SPEAKS, Continued.

if Petrograd were straining its last nerve to keep things going. It is a city in the state of siege. But now let me ask this gentleman: Does he really think that under Tsarism, for instance, it would have been possible for the people to endure so much and so long? What is his explanation of this wonderful power which a handful of people, whom he classifies as nondescripts, misanthropes and degenerates, has over the mass of the people? Why is it that Tsarism, with all its traditions and organisation, could not keep things together, and Bolshevism is still there, when everything is ruined and all the resources exhausted? What makes Bolshevism a problem, not to be swept aside as a mere froth of revolution? Even if he knows the answer I do not think he will give it. I remember reading an English article on Bolshevism about 10 months ago. The author of it warned England against the real danger of it. "These people," he said, "have the gospel of the working class in their hand; beware, England, lest it be too late for you to stop their progress!" This is the real secret of their power over the masses. Bolsheviks are only men and women, and, as such, they are open to criticism. But they have grasped the vision which you and many others have been hungering for all their lives, and they are able to fight for the realisation of it, because the masses of the people are with them. Essential as bread is to the life of the working class; there is something else which is just as important and worth dying for—and that is the Gospel of the class. And you English men and women, who paid £70,000,000 to stop the propagation of it, may be called upon to pay as much again, and again you may kill the people and the nation who are fighting for it, but you will never be able to kill the idea itself, so long as there is a single working man or woman left in the world.

THE MINERS' SOLUTION OF THE COAL QUESTION.

The position of the Coal Controller seems to us to be the biggest flaw in the scheme. It will be noticed by the table that he is the controller of selling prices; as such he is actually the controller of the miners' wages. The pamphlet explains that the M.F.G.B. Executive will act as an advisory body towards the Coal Controller, that its organised data will be invaluable to him and will place him "in a position which no corporation of private capitalists, however powerful, could hope to rival commercially." He will know the cost of every factor in production, and therefore if he is allowed to fix the price of coal he will be able indirectly to fix what wage he chooses for the miners.

It may be said that when the miners have control of the entire machinery of production, they will be able to set the Coal Controller at defiance; but in making a new scheme of their own, Socialist miners would do well not to endow a Coal Controller with powers which they will almost immediately find it necessary to wrest from him. The pamphlet states that the miners will not enjoy the full benefit of Socialisation till the other industries also are Socialised. Of course that is true, and under a communist Government the Coal Controller (if he should exist) would possess a very different outlook than he has under a capitalist Government; but, even under a Socialist Soviet system of society, we think the fixing of wages by a single Controller a bad plan, and the term "Coal Controller" is in itself unfortunate.

The pamphlet indicates that when other industries also have been Socialised, a Central Board of Control will be formed for all industry. Such a body, if genuinely representative of the rank and file workers, or a national council of workers' delegates, like the Soviets, or a referendum vote of the workers in all the industries, might properly decide the standard wage for every industry; we see no reason why the wages in all industries and grades should not be equal. In the meantime we think that the workers in the mining industry should fix the selling price of coal and also their own wages. It will be said that the miners would thus be able to exploit the community. So they might, and of course a piecemeal Socialisation of industry is certain to lead to anomalies; for our part we do not think workers' control of the mine will come till the social revolution is upon us. But, after all, the coal owners have always fixed the selling price of coal, and the community has been very patient in suffering exploitation by them. Foreign competition (and the facilities the Government, under these circumstances, would give to it) would in any case prevent the miners growing rich out of their industry, but if they should greatly improve their economic position, that fact would stimulate the workers in other trades to follow their example.

It is rightly proposed that the industry should provide that adequate pensions shall be paid to all permanently disabled and veteran miners.

The present minimum wage of the hewer is proposed as a flat rate for the industry; but it is believed that economies effected under management by the miners will enable this wage to be increased. The possibility that the Coal Controller might insist on lowering prices, instead of increasing wages, is not mentioned.

It is not stated whether the flat rate is to be applied also to the managers and technical staffs, but under a really democratic system all the workers in the industry, including the manager, would be paid the same wage.

It is proposed that all officials in the collieries and in the Miners' Federation itself should be democratically elected, but that only a person having the necessary certificate and experience for the post should be eligible for election. With that we entirely agree, but we think it a mistake that the agents, who are to inspect production, and the mine examiner, who inspects for safety, should be permanent officials when once elected. We think that all officials should come out for re-election periodically, and, if they are not returned, they should take their places amongst those whose work they have been inspecting, or, if incapable of work, they should be pensioned. We think also that all officials and elected persons should be subject to recall at any time by the body which elected them.

Democratising the M.F.G.B.

It is indicated that the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, which is to control the industry, is to be democratised.

Pit Committees are to be formed of 20 representatives of manual workers, and 22 representatives of the technical staffs. Sub-committees dealing with production, repairs and safety are to be formed, on which the representation of technical staffs and manual workers is to be equal. Colliery committees and sub-committees are to be formed of delegates from the Pit Committee, and again the technical and manual workers have an equal number of representatives. The Pit and Colliery Committees are responsible to *the Lodge* composed of all the workers in the colliery.

The *Local Area Committees* are composed of delegates elected by the workers in the area divided into districts, determined by the product, i.e., bituminous district, semi-bituminous, anthracite. As before, an equal number of representatives are given to manual and technical workers.

We think it a mistake to give as many representatives to the technical as to the manual workers, as the manual workers are of course vastly more numerous, especially as hitherto the scales have always been weighted against the manual workers.

Local Area Conferences, held monthly, would be composed of representatives of lodges and would deliberate on reports from the *Area Executive* and the M.F.G.B. Executive. In case of a dispute between the Area Conference and the Executive a ballot vote of the area would be taken. Thus the Conference would be a check on the Executive.

It is not quite clear whether the M.F.G.B Executive would be elected by the National Conference or by ballot of the entire membership, though it is stated that the permanent officials would be elected by ballot of the members. Again, we think all officials should be subject to re-election. All questions needing general endorsement would be referred to the ballot, the reference being endorsed by the Conference.

No provision is indicated for the recall of committee men. This should be added

The system of electing the National officials and Executive by means of a conference meeting for a few days annually or by a referendum of members has the important drawback of causing the officials to be elected by a constituency which has not the power to check and supervise their work in detail and to give them practical instructions on matters developing at short notice. The Soviet system of committees of delegates, each delegate instructed by, reporting to and subject to recall by the committee he or she represents, overcomes this difficulty; but it is objected that the system is too indirect and that the worker can only exercise influence through a series of committees upon the National Executive. The Russian system might be checked by giving power of referendum, and might be formed partially of directly-elected representatives, partly of committee delegates: experience would show which type of representative responded most closely to the will of the rank and file.

Free technical classes open to all workmen are also a part of the scheme. It is proposed to enrol boys leaving school at 14, who wish to enter the mining industry, into a cadet corps of miners for two years, during which time they will have a technical training, supplemented by short working period in different mines. It is proposed that they should have the same pay that lads receive now.

This suggestion is, in some respects, admirable, but it is strang that it is not suggested that the school age should be raised above 14 years. The curious thing about the scheme is that it is an attempt to graft a sprig of Socialism on to the Capitalist trunk; that creates anomalies and inconsistencies.

The pamphlet deserves a careful study by all who are interested in the future development of society.

E. Sylvia Pankhurst.

WHEN THE TRADE UNION CONGRESS MEETS.

When the Trade Union Congress meets in Glasgow on September 8th some important questions should be raised:—

(1) Why was the Triple Alliance Ballot stopped?

(2) What has happened to the Southport Resolution to stop the intervention in Russia and Hungary, which was referred to the Labour Party Executive and the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress?

(3) Why did the Labour leaders boycott the police strike and what is being done to protect the right of policemen to form a trade union?

(4) The Nationalisation of the Mines and Lloyd George's refusal to give any more than the Duckham Report, which simply means a number of big Trusts in the mining industry. Is Labour to swallow the Duckham proposals?

Only by Direct Action can the miners secure nationalisation.

JEANNE LABORDE.

Louise Bodin, a colleague of Jeanne Laborde, who was put to death by the French in Russia, gives these facts about her cruel fate, in *L'Humanite*, August 11th, 1919:—

". . . . Jeanne Laborde, our comrade, their comrade, was in Russia. Fate brought her into the country at the most pathetic moment in Russian history. Being human, she was a revolutionary. She had observed the misery and sufferings of the Russians, their tender-heartedness and the tremendous efforts made by the saviours of the Russian people for justice and fair play. She was at one with them, and heart and soul in the work to attain better conditions in the world. When the French troops landed at Odessa to fight against the Russian Bolshevik forces, she, like a modern Sabine, threw herself between the French and Russian soldiers. She explained to the soldiers that they were the brothers of those whom they had been sent to kill, or who might kill them. Then her arrest was ordered by the French authorities. . . . She was condemned to death because she spoke against death—that alone was her crime. As no platoons were to be found ready to carry out the sentence, officers volunteered for the task. One evening, under the pretext of transferring her to another prison, they took her to a cemetery, where they killed her as no 'apache' would kill a dog—these men who pose as the brave champions of right and civilisation. Realise this; *these were French officers*! . . . . They have assassinated Jeanne Laborde; it was done with revolvers; they left her body among the tombs, whilst they returned to their quarters smoking their cigars, having served their country well."

SOVIET ORGANISATION.

Volksrecht, July 22nd, 1919.—The Food Department of the Moscow Soviet is carrying out a large scheme of national kitchens, which will be complete this autumn, when 12 kitchens will be opened. Each establishment will provide 12,000 meals daily. The meals will be taken in thermos receptacles to the distributing centres.

Statistics of the Moscow Finance Department show that for the past year revenue from direct taxation was larger than in 1915-16. The Bureau of the Supreme Soviet for National Economy will register all professionals needed for land-surveying, such as civil engineers, topographists, etc., so as to have them at its disposal.

Five thousand children have arrived from the northern districts in Lubno and Piriatin. One hundred kindergartens have been provided for them, together with large stocks of food.

The Moscow Soviet of National Economy is manufacturing soap in the nationalised factories and using for the purpose substitutes such as clay and naphtha preparations. The output at present is sufficient for the population of Moscow.—From the People's Russian Information Bureau.

Communists.

"A Communist procession demonstrated yesterday in front of the offices of the *Reichspost* (Vienna Bourgeois organ) accused of having favoured the overthrow of the Hungarian Soviets. The demonstrators demanded the release of Bela Kun, and threatened the editor-in-chief."—*Avanti*, August 15th.

Soviets in Croatia.

In a telegram from Vienna to *Avanti* of July 27th it was reported that:—

The Hungarian Telegraphic Agency had received via Zalaegerszeg a message from Agram announcing that the revolution had broken out in Croatia. Army discipline had disappeared, the soldiers were leaving their barracks, officers and non-commissioned officers were tearing off their distinctive marks. Great uprisings had taken place at Varasdin and Agram, railway and telegraphic communications had been cut nearly everywhere. The Serbs were striving to check the revolt. Croat soldiers proclaimed an autonomous Croatian Republic in various towns and expressed their solidarity with the Soviets of Hungary.

WELL DONE, AUSTRALIAN SEAMEN!

Melbourne seamen still refuse to return to work and demand that their imprisoned secretary, Tom Walsh, shall represent them in negotiations. That spirit would have secured Shinwell's release long ago.

ANOTHER THRONE TOTTERING!

The resignation of the Roumanian Crown Prince is a sign of the times; kingship is now a dangerous trade!

MILITANT CAPITALISM AND THE ITALIAN WORKERS.

MILAN, ITALY, JULY 22nd. — All Italy has been under martial law for the past two and a half days. To-day the government is breathing a long sigh of relief and surprise that it is still in existence, and the revolutionists are taking stock of the remarkable demonstrations of fear exhibited by the bourgeois just because the workers had declared their intention of striking for two days in protest against the continued warfare by the Entente Powers against their brothers in Hungary and in Russia.

As if to prove that it was convinced that its hour had come, the Italian Government divided Milan into seven districts, each in command of a regiment of infantry and cavalry under a General, with plenty of dry powder for hundreds of portable machine guns. Turin, Venice, Genoa, and all other industrial centres of Italy were similarly safeguarded. But there wasn't a common soldier in any of the regiments! The Italian Government was not sure of the Italian workingman's willingness to shoot his brother down for taking part in a perfectly peaceful demonstration, so it organized regiments exclusively composed of officers. Even the regiments from the country in the north which had been brought down to Turin and Milan to "keep order" were found to be absolutely untrustworthy as so many members had joined the Socialists and were found reading the *Avanti*. These regiments were despatched to the less contaminating south, while the aforementioned regiments of officers requisitioned every available push-cart, horse, automobile, street-car or other means of locomotion in the big cities, and stationed their machine guns in the squares where it was supposed Socialist speakers would proclaim the Soviet Republic.

In Trieste the tie-up was complete, in spite of the army of occupation, and in Venice, on Sunday the twentieth, I saw several squads of "soldier officers" marching around St. Marks Square with fixed bayonets, while outside of several factories I visited lounged twenty or thirty uniformed men waiting for the workers who didn't come. They made an ugly picture as they waited, some hugging the scant shade afforded by an old building or a small bridge crossing a canal, while the majority endured a merciless Italian sun, which had already faded their greenish-brown uniforms and heated the menacing points of the bayonets fixed to the long guns to an untouchable temperature. If Venice could be made to look ugly, the Italian warships in the Lagoon and the little military launches darting in and out of the smaller canals carrying officers of "law and order," and the ugly torpedo boats surrounded by the Austrians and anchored at the head of the Grand Canal, would accomplish an unsurpassed hideousness.

"Yes, the strike was general," acknowledged one of the journalists to me to-day, "but they didn't establish the Soviets," he added jubilantly.

"We had no thought of establishing Soviets in Italy yesterday." Serrati, Editor of *Avanti*, the Socialist daily paper, stated emphatically. "To prove this we can show orders issued both by the Socialists and Syndicalists to the effect that this was to be nothing but a sympathetic strike for the benefit of our Russian and Hungarian comrades, and that no other demonstration except abstaining from work was to take place in the streets. We made no preparations whatever for street meetings and held only one protest meeting in our People's House (the People's House in Milan is about as big as the Royal Albert Hall, in London) where ten thousand people stood all day listening to the speeches of our national leaders. The bourgeoisie were very much frightened and used every means in their power to prevent the strike. Through terrorism and by means of false handbills sent broadcast through the working-class districts at the last minute they stated that the decision had been reached not to strike. But our workers are so well organized and were so solidly behind the declaration for a general strike, that these bills and wall posters falsely purporting to be signed by the Socialist Party and the Trade Unions produced absolutely no effect."

"The capitalist class was better organized to impede this general strike than it has ever been before. The "Arditi," a group of armed bourgeoisie, organized during the war to keep "law and order" and to foster patriotism, outdid itself in trying to fool the workers. They paraded in tramps, clothes singing revolutionary songs and carrying banners, saying they were the real workers and that the Socialists were the enemies of the working-men and women to call the general strike at this time. That the Socialist opposition to the imperialistic aspirations of the Italian Government for Fiume and Dalmatia was against the workingman's interest, and that true internationalism required that Fiume and Dalmatia should be administered by Italy, so that the Italian workers could assure the open door to all nations. We are decidedly enthusiastic about our success in this two days, demonstration."

Serrati explained that the principal cause for the complete success was the recent agreement between the Socialists on one hand undertaking to follow the lead of the Trades Unions in all matters of industrial and economic policy, while in return the Trades Unions agreed to follow the lead of the Socialists in their political policy, thus forming an alliance against the common enemy of capitalism.

Marsetto and Mariani, two of the seven General Secretaries of the Trade Union Confederation of Italy, were on the run all day long to-day seeking legal aid and material comforts for the ten thousand workmen arrested in Milan alone as suspects yesterday. No charges had been preferred against many of these prisoners, a great proportion of whom were arrested in their homes. Marsetto managed to give me fifteen minutes in which he expressed himself forcibly regarding the eleventh hour decision of the French not to strike and said that I must tell the American workers and comrades that never had the Italian workers demonstrated their unity so thoroughly.

"This house (the People's House) holds the offices and headquarters of one hundred and twenty thousand affiliated organizations," he said. "In Milan we have one hundred and fifty thousand readers of the Socialist paper *Avanti*, and since the Arditi burned the office of *Avanti* in May, we have received enough money to erect a new building in Turin, and have increased the circulation of the paper throughout Italy to one million. The cost of living has been cut at least fifty per cent. through the public demonstrations and seizure of foodstuffs by the people. In Florence and Rome the strike was complete, with the exception of the recently organized government railway men, who backed out at the last minute. Some trains ran but they were without passengers, because the public was either too loyal or too terrified to ride in them. The reports indicate that absolute order prevailed everywhere. The seventy thousand Socialists and the two million Trade Union members have proved their solidarity and are stronger to-day in Italy than ever before."

C. Lazzari, the old and much-tried secretary of the left wing Socialist Party, and just recently released from prison for his activity and speeches against the war, postponed his departure for Rome, in order to give me an interview. I found this splendid old man with his coat off and his shirt sleeves rolled up (it was a very hot day) writing a letter to the French Socialists, and spelling out the words with one finger on the typewriter as no stenographer in the office understood French. He occupied the only room not damaged by fire in the building of the *Avanti* when the Arditi raided it in May. His great stooping figure and the large brown eyes behind the gold-rimmed spectacles eloquently expressed the intensity with which he was trying to solve the mystery of why the French had withdrawn at the last minute.

"We feel that we have done our very best to help our comrades in Russia and Hungary," he said in answer to my first question, "and that our general strike throughout Italy will help Internationalism, but we want all comrades throughout the world to work with us. We do not understand why the comrades in France called their strike off, or how they expect to work internationally, unless they co-operate by adhering to agreements. We are at a loss to know why the sudden decision was taken not to strike and could hardly believe the telegram we received on the eve of the strike, as the French had not only declared their intention of striking, but had asserted that whether the Italian and English agreed or not, their decision to hold the strike was irrevocable. You can tell the French comrades that we are anxiously awaiting the exact explanation. We cannot understand how a local question of food supply could enter into the decision against a demonstration in favour of fair treatment for our comrades fighting for the revolution in Russia and Hungary."

"Please ask all the American comrades to let us know what they are doing," he continued. "We heard rumours that there was to be a general strike in the United States on the Fourth of July and we wanted to join if it were true, and intended to be international. We have demonstrated our strength and solidarity now and want to co-operate with all those fighting the class struggle throughout the world."

In Turin, I visited the very room where this magnificent old man had made a speech during the war which resulted in his imprisonment. It is situated in the People's House which holds the offices of sixty-seven Labour organisations in Turin with a membership of sixty thousand workers, and is decorated with first-class oil paintings picturing the life of Italian working men and women by a member of the confederation. This house also showed signs of the police occupation of two months ago and several bullet holes in the ceiling were the souvenirs of shooting from the street by the police during the crowded meeting, when Lazzari, one of the best orators in Italy, was making a famous speech.

Tolliatti, a lawyer and professor in the Turin University and one of the editors of the *Avanti* which is published in Turin (*Avanti* is published every day in Milan, Rome, and Turin and has a building of its own in each city), said that so complete was the strike that the military had to man the water-works and the electric light plants.

"This strike is the first that the peasants in the country have joined "said Tolliatti". The government imported many soldiers from the country several months ago, but in a very short time my office was filled with letters of sympathy from them. All the soldiers for strike duty two days ago were regiments composed of officers only. We noted this with surprise, as, although we had hoped that the great mass of

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The Battle of the Baltic

ANOTHER BLOT ON THE FLAG!

Those who prefer to avert their thoughts from anything unpleasant may have made themselves believe that the Allied Governments in general, and the British Government in particular, were half-hearted in their fight against Communism, and were preparing presently to abandon it. But such illusions must surely have been dispelled by the Battle of the Baltic on August 18th. The event was announced with jubilation by the Capitalist Press that four Communist vessels, two of them battleships, had been sunk. The "Times" in reporting the incident said:

> "Eight British officers and three men lost their lives. Their relatives at home may gain some consolation from the fact that they died in striking a blow for the freedom of the world from Bolshevist militarism, and therefore for the safeguarding of the peace which the armed forces of the Allied peoples have won."

The untruthful hypocrisy of the statement is so gigantic that it almost takes our breath away—used though we are to leaders in the "Times." The Communists only ask to be left in peace to develop the coming social order. They have offered many concessions and suffered much indignity at the hands of the Allies in order to stop the war, yet now those who are clamouring for their extermination talk smugly of "safeguarding the peace"!

We deeply regret the men lost in the battle on both sides. It is tragic that our Russian comrades should be forced to yield up their lives in order to maintain their Workers' Republic, but is still more horribly tragic that British soldiers and sailors of the working class should be throwing themselves away by playing the part of traitors and blacklegs in the international war between Capital and Labour. We are glad to learn that the Communists deny that two of their battleships have been sunk. The 'Perrosvanni,' they say, received only slight damage and can be repaired in a few days.

Churchill told Parliament:

> "We are withdrawing from North Russia. We are also withdrawing our troops from the Caucasus, and we are withdrawing our two battalions from Siberia. In a few months we shall hardly have any British officers or soldiers in Russia."

What are the facts?

Last week the Press reported that sixty British battleships had been sent to the Baltic and that others were following, that a British squadron was in the Gulf of Riga, that the entrance to Petrograd had been closed by a British minefield, that there had been a British raid on Kronstadt harbour, and that a British squadron was transporting from Libau to Esthonia Prince Lieven's army, equipped by the German authorities to fight with General Yudenitch against Soviet Russia. Phillips Price reported that recruiting offices for soldiers to fight against Russia had been opened in Berlin, Jena, Hamburg, and other parts of Germany.

The British occupation of Armenia makes it easy for the British to control Batum, which is the port for the oversea trade route to Constantinople and through the Dardanelles to Africa and Western Europe. Batum is also the terminus of the railway to Baku, which is not only the centre for the great oil wells, but is the base of Allied operations in South Russia.

The Glasgow Bulletin of July 25th contained the following paragraph whiich throws light on the question of British troops in the Caucasus:—

LABOUR IN THE CAUCASUS.

Shareholders in the International Russian Oilfields, Ltd., have recommended the directors to suspend operations on the property, which is situate in the Caucasus, to sell off what materials may be left, and to do everything practicable to retain the rights over as many leases as possible. In the course of a statement, the Chairman said: "The demands of labour are appalling. For example, they require practically to control operations; they vote themselves what wages they like, a month's holiday every year, medical attention for themselves and families, free education, on leaving a month's pay for every year of service, and there is constant interference with the management. At one time the workmen claimed that everything belonged to them, but since the Bolsheviks have been turned out of the district this claim seems ot hav been droppd, or at least suspended. We are not allowed to sell or remove any material from the plots without the consent of the Workmen's Council, and even if we had a profitable production we could not remit the proceeds out of the country, but, of course, this may be altered with a change in political conditions."

The revolting soldiers will certainly be punished severely unless comrades in the Army and in industry rally strongly to their support. We must unite in endeavouring to protect them from victimisation. Some day a lead such as that given at Southampton, will be generally responded to by the Army: then there will be no question of victimisation. Those who take their stand in these days of danger perform the greater service. They have displayed the highest courage.

WHAT WILL THE MINERS DO?

Direct Action is the only practical answer for the miners to make to Lloyd George's decision to trustify instead of to nationalise the mines, but already the Labour Leaders are agitating against action. Their reply is: "Wait till we become the Government."

"Henderson for Widnes."

"Liberal Vote to be given to the Labour Candidate."

The above quotation from the *Daily Herald* headline aptly sums up the official Labour attitude of to-day: it is the attitude always attacked by Keir Hardie, the founder of the political Labour movement, the first and constant duty of which he conceived to be rigid independence. Under Coalition taunts Henderson has revealed the fact that visiting Russia at the time of Kerensky's Premiership as the emissary of Lloyd George's Government he was given power to dismiss the British Ambasador in Russia and to take his post at a salary of £8000 a year. Evidently Henderson accepted or at least intended to accept the mission on those terms, but he decided not to evict the Ambassador. He says it would have been unfair.—Why? Was he satisfied with the way in which the position was being occupied by Sir George Buchanan, the pro-Czarist and pro-Capitalist who was intriguing against the revolution, even before the Communists came into power? But why was Mr. Henderson sent to Russia at all? Was it to counteract the growing power of the Bolshevists? He says, as though it were something of which to be proud that the Bolshevists are those who have the greatest objection to his policy. How is it possible for Socialists to work in conjuction with men whose policy is that of Henderson?

MRS. SNOWDEN'S PROTEST.

Mrs. Philip Snowden's protest against the Lucerne Conference is at once courageous and pathetic: she is not a Communist, but a Reformist. Writing of the International meeting of Women Socialists recently she deplored the fact that Clara Zetkin and Rosa Block had become "fierce converts to Bolshevism." But now she condemns the Lucerne Conference as "worth exactly nothing." She justly declares that the failure of the July 21st strikes revealed to the Capitalist Governments that they could crush the Hungarian Soviets with impunity. She asks what the organisations claiming to represent the world's workers are going to do to get the Capitalist Armies out of Russia and to stop the blockade, to save Germany and Austria from destruction, to secure the self-determination of peoples, to stop plunder and extortion by the Capitalists and Imperialists of America and the Allies.

The answer to your protest and to your questions, Mrs. Snowden, is that the Reformist policy is bankrupt and self-destructive.—The only hope lies in Communism and the Third International, the dictatorship of the working masses until Capitalism is extinct.

Have you the faith and the courage Mrs. Snowden, to leave the Second International and to take your stand with the Third?

Now comes the news from the Murmansk correspondent of the Christiania "Tidens Tegn" that "large British transports are arriving daily with troops and munitions," that "twice as many troops are arriving as are being sent home," and that the British are attacking Shenkursk with poison gas. Who can doubt that Capitalism is now fighting what it knows to be a life-and-death struggle against Communism? It is only the workers who shut their eyes to the facts of the contest.

THE SOLDIERS ACT.

And yet there is an awakening. On August 22nd soldiers of the Warwick and Gloucester regiments gave a straight, brave lead, by refusing to embark for Russia. The number of soldiers who thus employed direct action is variously estimated at 300 to 500; the number is not likely to have been overstated. Some of the men had been told in France that after their leave at home they would be sent to Russia. They had been given lectures on Russia and provided with maps. They took their stand on the Government's statement that only volunteers are sent to Russia; but the Army code of discipline is of the "theirs not to question why: theirs but to do and die" order. They were surrounded by bayonets and Lewis guns, and placed under arrest.

Now it is said that the men were destined for Turkey. Russian deportees who were told they were being sent to Russia were taken away for internment in Turkey. Are soldiers who are said to be going to Turkey taken away to fight in Russia? The "Daily Herald" suggests that their destination may have been Armenia, "to stop massacres," as though if that were so all objection to their going would be removed when predatory Capitalism desires to make war, either for the purpose of annexing territory to crush a trade rival, or, as in this case, to subdue a Workers' Government for daring to practise Communism. The Capitalist Government that is going to make the attack always pretends to be actuated by some highly virtuous motive, which is usually to suppress disorder and to protect defenceless people. The same dishonest pretence has been put forward to excuse the Allied attack on Soviet Russia and Soviet Hungary.

Continued on next page

THE BATTLE OF THE BALTIC, Continued.

The Two Internationals.

The Third International is daily growing in power. The Italian, Swiss, and Norwegian Socialist parties have already joined it: and now the Madrid section of the Spanish Socialist Party has decided to hold a special Conference to consider taking the same step.

Mrs. Snowden justly complains that the Second International "is not International." Moreover it is not Socialist, and this failing is the greater of the two: were the Conference Socialist, it would be of necessity internationalist.

The Italian Socialists in explaining their reasons for seceding from the Second International, say that it contains too many types of Socialists, and that the types mixing badly together, produce political inconsistency, opportunism, and ambiguity.

But unfortunately it seems to us that the Italian Socialists are very charitable to the Second International. For, so far from the differences between its members being the most apparent factor; the sad and barren unity they display in opposing the workers' revolution outweighs all their differences. J. R. MacDonald in the "Labour Leader" of August 14th, clearly reveals this: He says—

> "Of the Third International I have no fears, it has no roots. It is the creation of a revolutionary period. If it lasts it will be our fault."

Again, in reporting to the Second International, on the negotiations with the Italian Party, MacDonald declared that there could not be two Internationals. Nevertheless whilst the Second International must use all its energies (presumably to withdraw adherent from the Third) "a purely anti-Bolshevik attitude would be fatal, because it would not have the masses behind it."

It should be noticed that though, as his custom, MacDonald uses very temperate phrases, he is strongly and definitely opposed to the Communists and to the Third International.

Those who are opposed to Communism, to the Communists and the Revolution are unfitted to lead the movement to protect the achievements of the Communist Revolution. Surely that is obvious.

W. Adamson, M.P. at the Southport Conference declared that no one could possibly have conducted a better fight against the intervention in Russia than the Parliamentary Labour Party; but how can men who are constantly stopping to attack the Communists and the Soviets be wholehearted in their defence. So it is that the Labour Party has raised no voice of protest against the violent overthrow of the Hungarian Soviets.

To be conciliatory is often a virtue, but it is not a virtue when principles are at stake.

Conciliation is not a virtue when it leads Communists to remain in an International which glosses over the armed attack by some of its members on the Soviet Republics, and the support given by those members to the capitalist intervention.

Conciliation was not a virtue when it assented to the recognition by the Second International of an Esthonian Republic, in which Reformist Socialists were given 41 out of 120 seats in the Assembly, and at a time when that so-called Republic was fighting the Russian Soviet armies, and thus directly or indirectly aiding Allied Imperialism or Russian reaction. At the present time this Esthonian Government is using its power to march Esthonian peasants against Russian peasants as a lever to obtain Allied protection for itself. If the Allies will promise to recognise it as the Government of an Independent Esthonia, this Government with its "Socialist" members, recognised by the Second International, will fight with the Czarist General Yudenich and the Allied capitalists to crush Soviet Russia which has already guaranteed Esthonian independence. Could anything be more cynical?

It seems to us that it must have been a source of weakness to the Hungarian Soviet Government, that, in the name of conciliation, we suppose—its President should have been Alexander Garbai, the leader of the Hungarian Social Democratic Party, and an implacable enemy of the Communists, till on Karolyi's resignation, Communism was revealed as the only power that could cope with the situation. Jacob Weltner, President of the Socialist Party, (according to "La Feuille," August 17th), carried on the negotiation with the Allied Military Missions, which led to the resignation of Bela Kun and the Soviet Government, the disarming of the Hungarian forces, and the formation of the Peidl Ministry so ruthlessly overturned by the Roumanian Armies. Though Weltner called himself a Socialist, an article which has appeared from him in the "Vienna Arbeiter Zeitung," proves him to have been unfitted to guard Communist interests.

It is not possible for Communists to work with the so-called Socialists of the German Government which murdered Luxemburg and Liebknect and which has opened in Germany recruiting offices for troops to fight Soviet Russia, and which also gave hospitality to a recruiting office for the troops used to crush the Hungarian Soviet. A similar recruiting office was permitted in Vienna by the so-called Socialists of the Austrian Government.

Under the cloak of democracy, the timid Reformists are hiding in company with the most reactionary forces of capitalism. Because the Hungarian Government was formed on the Soviet instead of the Parliamentary system, the Allied Governments crushed it, excusing themselves by the pretence that it was undemocratic. To keep up their pretence of loving democracy and to revenge themselves on the Hapsburgs (perhaps that is a pretence too) the Allies refused to recognise the Friedrich Government so long as the Archduke Joseph retained power. Yet the Allies had connived at forcible seizure of power by the Archduke and the Friedrich Government.

The Allies now protest that the Friedrich Government was "not established by the will of the people, but by a Coup d'état carried out by a small group of police under the protection of a foreign Army." They have now told Mr. Friedrich to form a new Government representing all classess of society within three days time. This might be taken to mean that Mr. Friedrich is to have the sole choice of Hungary's Government. Friedrich is the nominee of a party—the party of reaction—and it is that party, in conjunction with the Big Four, which will dictate who is to be in the new Government.

Another Russian Intrigue.

Intrigue defeated the Hungarian Soviets, and the same subtle influences are striving to wreck the Soviets in Russia. It is said that as a result of Koltchak's defeats the Allied Governments have decided to change their tactics and are now working to establish a "democratic" Russian Government, to be composed of representatives of all the anti-Bolshevik parties, from the Right Social Revolutionaries to the old Octobrist Party, with Koltchak and Denikin as military comanders only. It is proposed to call a Conference of Russian political parties in Paris in September. Of course it is hoped by this move to capture the half-hearted reformists and those who are prepared to sacrifice any and every principle to avoid the hardships which the Allied attack has brought upon Russia. It is hoped by uniting the reformists and the despairing with the reactionaries, that the Soviets may be overthrown. Should the plan succeed, reaction would speedily gain the upper hand, "democracy" would be banished from the brogramme, and, as in the bad old days of Tsarism, the streets of Russia would run red with the blood of martyrs; the heel of reaction would be planted again on the neck of the Russion people.

The peril is great. What part will be played by the Second International in this intrigue?

We believe that Soviet Russia will win through in spite of all.

RANK AND FILE PROTESTS.

Wandsworth Branch of the Licensed Vehicle Workers calls for a down-tools policy to support the police, and demands the immediate withdrawal of the Triple Alliance from the Labour Party.

Islington Branch, National Union of Clerks, expresses disgust at the betrayal of the police by the Labour Party E.C and P.C. of Trade Union Congress.

Glasgow District Committee of A.S.E. calls on the Executive of the Socity to instruct sea-going members not to sail on ships bearing munitions to Russia, and demands that the E.C. shall pledge the A.S.E. to support the Triple Alliance in Direct Action against the intervention.

Norwegian soldiers have set up their own councils. Stockholm has also a Soldiers' and Sailors' Council of its own.

INTERNED IN TURKEY.

We learn that a party of Russian political refugees who whre deported without trial last June were supposed to be bound for Odessa, but 79 of them, not five, as previously reported by the Russian Delegates' Committee, were taken off the boat at Constantinople and interned at "Fort Chenak," Dardanelles Internment Camp, Turkey. The news has come to us from one of the internees.

THE WHITE TERROR IN SWITZERLAND.

Berner Tagwachit, August 16th, reports that the Town Council of Zurich has ordered the cancelling of all rent agreements with those who took part in the general strike.

Marshal Foch hasprohibited political meetings in the Saar region.—*Frankfurter Zeitung*.

Greiheit, August 13th, declares that Noske's troops under Lætlow-Vorbeck in Hambourg entered the military hospitals and flogged and tortured the patients.

DISCHARGED SOLDIERS.

Five hundred ex-service men chosen from 6,000 willing to go, will march from Manchester to London to ask for work or higher unemployment benefit for the demobilised men who are unemployed.

It is also reported that the National Federation of Discharged and Demobilised Soldiers is organising a cinema play against Bolshevism.

Do the members, especially the workless members, approve of it?

TO PROTECT CAPITALISM.

The décision of the Municipal authorities at the Hague and other Dutch towns and villages to establish Burgher guards consisting of citizens to defend private property is an indication that Dutch capitalism fears the people and is preparing to defend its interests.

A Labour College is to be opened in Derby; the opening lecture will be given by W. Paul in the Co-operative Central Hall, September 7th, at 11 a.m.

OIL AND UPLIFT IN MEXICO.

"A meeting was recently held in the Bankers' Club, New York City," says the International News Service, "between representatives of American oil interests in Mexico and a leading religious organisation to map out the campaign of spiritual unlift for our boys in the inevitable war with Mexico."—From the *Daily Herald*.

The expression, "spiritual uplift," is particularly exquisite.

"FACTORY ECHOES."

Factory Echoes," by R. M. Fox, who is well known in the North London Socialist movement, is a collection of sketches of factory life, curbstone studies and the struggling, toilsome existence of the workers. The author wisely writes of everyday life he knows, therefore his work is interesting and will grow in value. An old theme is treated with surprising freshness in the story of the angel who, coming to earth, was dragged to the police station, "where they worried him so much about registration cards and exemption certificates that he pined away and died."

*London: C. W. Daniel, Ltd., Graham House, Tudor-street, E.C.4.

MILITANT CAPITALISM AND THE ITALIAN WORKERS.

Continued.

the soldiers were with us, we had never been optimistic enough to claim all the common soldiers as our converts. The fact that the government which is in a position to know pretty accurately the temper of the soldiers, seems to distrust them as government tools is, it seems to me, one of the most encourasging things about this very satisfactory strike. In spite of sops thrown out to the workers by the employers, in the shape of maternity benefits, eight hour day, and sick insurance, there is great discontent in Turin. Even the usually conservative suffrage leaders, still fighting for that back number the political vote, acknowledge that they are Socialists and are members of the Party. It is certainly only a question of time before the army will be solidly with the Revolution, and then a government of, for, and by the workers in Italy can be established.

Some of the posters which the "Arditi" and government agents pasted all over the walls of Venice, Milan, and Turin the night before the strike read as follows:

"People of Milan, react against the Bolshevik provocateurs and proclaim your patriotism aloud! Unfold to the sun from all your windows the glorious flag of Italy, and decorate your breasts with the victorious symbol of your country, the tricolor. Open your places of business and order will reign at Milan."

"Filippo Corridoni, the revolutonary who has been a hundred times arrested and twenty times condemned when he led you into the piazza, paid for his audacity! Be careful! Serrati, Mariani and Ruposi always cut the ropes when *they* are out of danger!"

"Italian groups of Combatant Citizens! The so-called proletarian dictatorship would resolve itself in Italy into the triumph of the set of ambitious politicians more bourgeois than the actual ministry. The workers will continue to serve and to be exploited!"

There were dozens of these posters worded in different ways all exhibiting terror on the part of the ruling classes for the mere word of Soviet. Many of these anti-strike posters were openly and falsely signed by the Socialist Party and the Trades Unions, as I said before. Some of them were in subtle verse!

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THE SWISS GENERAL STRIKE.

By HIRAM K. MODERWELL.

The general strike in Basle and Zurich, the second Switzerland has had since the armistice, is over. Switzerland! that pure democracy of the mountains, where all are healthy and all are fed! A Swiss pastor the other day told a friend that he had scrapped the Biblical injunction, "Remember the poor," because there were no poor in his parish.

And yet in Switzerland there are general strikes, with red-flagged parades singing the "Internationale" and police sabring the demonstrators and soldiers firing their machine guns at unarmed spectators. What can it mean?

It means that the Swiss workers have learned that mountain climate and pure democracy are no protection against the ravages of capitalism. When the war got well under way, the prices of food in Switzerland began to rise. The workers struck for higher wages in this factory and that. They won their demands—and the prices rose again. Strangely enough they refused to accept the mountain breeze in exchange for bread. They learned that even in Switzerland the workers are protected only by their own power.

Then they learned something else. They learned that when the textile workers, for example, struck and obtained a higher wage, the price of textiles rose for all. The success of the spinners and dyers of Basle was paid for, under Capitalism, by all the workers. They could not, with their old trade union methods, catch up with this furious race. They began to think of heading it off. They began to demand the general limitation of prices. But this implied the general strike.

The idea of the general strike was urged by the radical Socialists. It was opposed by the old trade union bureaucracy. The opposition was strong enough to prevent the radicals from obtaining a general nation-wide order for the strike. So last month they started the movement in the spot where they were strongest—Basle—hoping that it would grow.

On Wednesday, July 30, the "Action Committee" of the "Organized Working Class of Basle," taking their mandate from the specially delegated representatives of the various factory groups, issued the call for the general strike. The immediate purpose was a declaration of solidarity with the striking textile workers. But beyond this there was the recognition of the fact that the success of the textile workers would mean a higher price for winter underwear, unless the workers defended themselves as consumers.

THE STRIKERS' DEMANDS.

The demands of the strikers show to what good purpose the workers have been studying the admirable administration of Bela Kun in Budapest. They were:

1.) Lower fixed prices for bread.

2.) Confiscation by the government of all stocks of shoes and clothes, and the sale of these at fixed reduced prices.

3.) Confiscation of all unused dwellings and dwelling space, and the assignment of such space to the homeless or overcrowded workers: reduced fixed rents.

These measures are perfectly practicable and adequate, so far as they go, but no bourgeois government would grant them, except as an act of self-preservation.

On July 31 the response to the strike appeal was almost 100 per cent. The city employees, clerks as well as labourers, responded to the appeal of the "Action Committee." The gas workers, who had been told to stay at work for the time being, went out on their own responsability. Folded arms made Zurich helpless.

The ACTION COMMITTEE'S INSTRUCTIONS

The orders of the "Action Committee" show its capacity for practical leadership. They were as follows:

1.) The consumption of alcohol must under all circumstances be avoided.

2) Restaurants and food shops to remain open for the present, but the workers are urged to make only the most necessary purchases.

3.) All industries are to be closed.

4.) Public services are also subject to the strike, except that the gas, water and electric supply works shall furnish the diminished "Sunday schedule." Gas, water and electric light supply to be subject from day to day to the orders of the "Action Committee."

5.) Not affected by the strike are employees of hospitals, morgues and prisons.

6) Also not affected are clerks engaged in the distribution of milk, fruit, and vegetables, and workers in the bakeries.

News came that many groups in Zurich had already struck, and that the general strike would probably be proclaimed immediately the workers poured out on to the streets.

And at the same time the first of four regiments of troops began to enter the city.

SOLDIERS SHOOT and SABRE the PEOPLE

The troubles with the police and the troops began in the usual manner. Groups of workers stationed themselves outside the factories to dissuade blacklegs from going to work, and outside the shops to urge the clerks to join the demonstration. They were told to "move on." There were arguments, then provocations, and—blood.

That there was no provocation on the par of the younger strikers cannot be said. But it is certain that the provocation on the part of the officers of the troops was open and shameless. There is evidence that the bourgeoisie wished to drown the strike in blood in order to terrify the rest of the Swiss workers. Accurate accounts of the trouble are always difficult to obtain, but the accounts published in the bourgeois press have been proved untrue in every essential detail.

Disgraceful details of the first day of the strike in Basle are abundant. The police used their sabres on men and women without commanding them to disperse. The soldiers replied with shots to mere disrespectful words from bystanders. One eye-witness saw an officer deliberatety aim his revolver at the head of a workman (the father of several children) and shoot him dead. A group of young men who had been ordered by the sanitary officer to carry the man's body to the morgue, was fired on with fatal results when it passed in front of the barracks. In the evening a crowd, mostly of onlookers, which was gathered in Marktplatz, was told to leave. And when it obeyed the order, going up a side-street, it was deliberately fired on by the troops, and thus caught in a trap. The result of the various encounters was three men and two women killed and many wounded. The strike Committee thereupon ordered all strikers to stay off the streets and under no circumstances to allow themselves to be provoked.

Whether the blood of Basle had any effect in intimidating the workers of other cities

(*Continued on next page.*)

THE SWISS GENERAL STRIKE.

Continued.

cannot be ascertained. It is probable that the failure of the strike elsewhere was due to other causes.

The response to the general strike call in Zurich was excellent, but some groups refused to strike and others postponed their decision. In other cities, politically not so advanced as Basle, the influence of the trade union leaders and of the moderate Socialists was sufficient to prevent action. It was the news of this general refusal, with its resulting psychology of failure, which began to weaken the Zurich strike on the third day.

WOMENS' EDUCATIONAL SQUADS.

In Basle there were organized many "Womens' Educational Squads" which made a house to house canvass in the working class quarter to enlighten all doubtful persons as to the object of the strike. But outside such educational work, the function of the strikers was only that of the folded arms. They preserved admirable discipline. After the first day there were no killed or wounded.

THE "WHITE GUARD."

Another indication of the progress of Switzerland in capitalistic evolution, has been the systematic formation of a "White Guard" in many industrial towns. This is always quite unofficial—a mere club of middle-class lads who like to train themselves in target-shooting; but strangely enough, Army officers drill them. And stranger still, when a strike comes they appear as a part of the special municipal police. The guard is paid for in secret by an association of employers, the Basle Public Economy League, which expended between 20,000 and 30,000 francs a day for the maintenance of its private army during the strike. It is now secretly collecting money for the permanent expenses of the guard and for the "wives and children" of the guardsmen. The idea is being enthusiastically received by the capitalists of other cities.

THE SOCIALIST DAILY SUPPRESSED.

The story of the suppression of the Socialist daily, the "Basler Vorwärts," is also enlightening. The printers and pressmen, in resolving to strike, had made a specific exception of the workers' paper, the "Vorwärts." The result was that the bourgeois papers did not appear at all, unless in the form of small handbills, printed probably by the editors themselves. The military officer in command thereupon demanded of the strike Committee that the bourgeois papers be allowed to appear as usual. The demand was refused. Then he demanded that the "Vorwärts" should appear in the same format as the others. Again the Committee refused. Thereupon he ordered his troops to occupy the offices of the "Vorwärts," and the paper was forcibly prohibited from then on until the end of the strike. There could be no clearer illustration of the intention of the bourgeoisie to meet the peaceful economic power of the workers by military force.

VICTIMISATION and the WORKERS' BLOCKADE.

Though the Zurich strike began to fade after three days, the workers in Basle stuck it out splendidly. After ten days, though few defections had occured, the Committee declared the strike at an end.

The employers regarded this as a signal victory for them. They began issuing permanent dismissals against such of their employees as had taken a prominent part in the strike. This, again, caused little hang-over strikes, lasting for a few hours or a day. The chief counter-weapon of the workers, however, is the labour blockade. At present Basle is "blockaded" to metal workers, and Geneva to all labour immigration whatsoever.

SOLDIERS FORCE WORKERS TO FACTORY.

Some employers took their workers back only under the conditions of an "agreement" (which of course the workers never signed) stating that there would never be another strike in the factory until all conferences with the employers had failed, and in any case, not "under the influence" of persons not employed in the factory (e.g., trade union officials). At the Escher-Wyss machine shops the workers were set to work in military fashion; a crowd of workers, picketing near the entrance, was forced by the soldiers, literally at the point of the boyonet, to enter the factory and go to work. Some of the employees of the Schöller dye-works were actually dragged out of their beds early one morning by the soldiers and taken by force to the factory, where under threats they were made to work.

From these anecdotes it will be inferred that "the breach between capital and labour" is not yet "healed" in Switzerland. On the contrary, the inevitable evolution is going steadily on. The workers are learning that to obtain even such simple justice as the public sale of goods which are hoarded for profiteering, they must act unitedly. And when they have succeeded in that, when they have obtained a retail price-scale from the government, they will learn, as the Italian workers are learning now, that this is not enough. In the next phase they will learn, as Russia has already learned, that to obtain for themselves the things they themselves produce, they must own the means of production and distribution.

DUBB DIALOGUES.

By L. A. MOTLER

Part III.

Scene: A workshop.

Characters: Henry Dubb and the Auther's Ghost

Henry—In these last two Dialogues you have been stuffing me up with Marx, and I never did you any harm.

Ghost—I was doing my best to have Marx explained to you,

Henry—Well, I wish as what you had used somebody else. That there Sogiashatelist of yours, blimey, I don't think he knows any more what he was talking about than what I do.

Ghost—That seemed pretty obvious at the start.

Henry—Then why worry me?

Ghost—I thought you wanted to know what Socialism means, so I put a professional on the job.

Henry—Well, if all professionals is like him, you Socialists might as well shut up shop. When I hear a chap spouting like what he does, or reads a book written in the same way, it simply prejudices the workingman against having anything to do with this here Socialism.

Ghost—That is how it struck me. I am glad to see that you agree with me in that respect. At the same time I don't like to push myself forward as a writer of plain English. I merely do the comic stuff.

Henry—What I wants to know is why on earth they keeps talking about the proletariat as they call it?

Ghost—It is for the sake of brevity. At least that is their idea. The term "proletariat" indicates one without anything to sell but his labour power. In other words one who has to hire himself out to a boss in order to get money to pay for things.

Henry—Then why can't they say workman?

Ghost—Because the workers are divided into different branches, such as workers in factories, workers on the land, sailors and soldiers, and so on.

Henry—They could just as easy say the same as you have just done. When an employer wants workmen he don't put up a notice "Proletarians wanted," now does he?

Ghost—No. But then an employer isn't a Socialist.

Henry—Then give me the employer every time. When my boss talks to me I get the hang of it right on the minute.

Ghost—The Socialists are merely trying to educate the workingman up to it. They mean well.

Henry—Well, it seems to me they are going the wrong way about it, that's all. I should like to hear how you explains this here Socialism.

Ghost—It is difficult to put it in a few words. The main idea is to make the whole of the people as well off as can be. Starting off with that idea, we have a job on hand. This job is plenty of work, good houses, good clothes, good everything for about forty or fifty millions in the British Isles.

Henry—What about pay? You forgot that.

Ghost—No. If you have a good job, good clothes, and a good house you surely don't want any money?

Henry—What about grub?

Ghost—Oh, that includes grub of course. A man simply does a fair day's work, and helps himself to what he wants.

Henry—But supposing there ain't enough to go round?

Ghost—There will be enough to go round, never fear. At present there are about fifteen millions of workers. Are you any good at arithmetic?

Henry—Fair. Pretty fair.

Ghost—Well, you will see that fifteen millions in forty-five is only one-third. Now those fifteen millions are keeping not only themselves but the others as well.

Henry—But most of the others are women and kids.

Ghost—Not such a lot of them. The fifteen millions includes women-workers as well and boys and girls. There ought not to be a woman, let alone a boy or a girl, doing work which a man could do.

Henry—Hear, hear. I was always agen cheap female labour.

Ghost—Well, as I said, here you have fifteen millions at work. Now, suppose these work twelve hours a day. It follows that if there were thirty millions at work, all this could be done in six hours a day.

Henry—That seems clear.

Ghost—But that is not all. We are supposing that all the work done is necessary. That is not so. You will be familiar with the argument that it only takes one postman to deliver letters in one street, but it takes six milkmen to deliver milk in the same street.

Henry—Yes. But then milk is so different. Some as what I've had you could see to the bottom of the can.

Ghost—That is merely the effect of this system, where things are made to sell. The idea is to put money in a business that will bring in a good profit. If it doesn't, well, the capitalist either takes his money out, or puts in adulterants. You have heard the joke about the man at the restaurant? The waiter has just served the soup, and looks out of the window. "Looks like rain, sir," he says. "Yes," says the customer, pushing the soup away after a spoonful, "and tastes like it, too!"

Henry—Ha, ha! Tell us another.

Ghost—I'm afraid not. This is not a comic paper. The joke proves my point anyway. And this is that so long as things are made to make a profit out of, just so long will the pump get mixed up with the cow, and you'll find turnip tops in the apple jam.

ABOUT INTERVENTION.

AN APPEAL FROM RUSSIAN COMMUNISTS IN BUENOS AIRES.

The Federation of Russian Workers' Organisations in South America, at its Third Congress, issued an appeal to the workers against the Capitalist intervention in Russia and in support of the Soviets. But no sooner had the Federation manifested its solidarity with Soviet Russia and its consequent opposition to any Bourgeois Government than the police inaugurated a campaign of violence against the Russian Communists. In Buenos Aires, in January, 1919, the police shot six strikers. A one-day General Strike was held as a protest. The Government thereupon provoked a rising which nearly brought about its own downfall. The tragedy lasted seven days. Although not properly organised and quite unprepared for a revolutionary rising, the working masses made a desperate stand. 3,000 of the workers lost their lives, 10,000 were wounded. The responsibility for the rising was foisted upon the Russian Communists. People were even killed because they looked like Russians. Bands of soldiers and police and the dregs of the Bourgeoisie pillaged the dwellings of Russian workers. They violated women and even children. They set light to the beards of old men, then urinated in their faces with loud guffaws, pretending they did it to put out the fire. If the victims cried out, they were bayoneted. It hurts and humiliates to dwell on the scenes. The White Terror has continued ever since. Other workers are included in the persecution, but the Russians are treated with the most savage inhumanity.

The Argentine Government has recently issued a decree prohibiting all working class propaganda, whether verbal or in writing. In the course of a fortnight about 1,000 of our most advanced comrades were arrested. They were accused of being Communists and deported to the islands, where they are detained in damp cells, half-starved and beaten every day without even a pretext.

Only four members of the committee of our federation have succeeded in evading arrest, and they are in hiding. Russians are still being arrested in the street and deported to the islands without trial. They are "threatened" with repatriation, but, for two reasons, we believe, the authorities have other intentions:—

(1) The sailors refuse to work on ships carrying deportees.

(2) The secret manner of the arrests and the silence of the Press.

We believe that the gradual extermination of the Russian Communists is intended, the blame to be put on some epidemic later on.

The blockade prevents the Russian workers from returning to revolutionary and regenerated Russia. The attitude of the Argentine Government is entirely dependent on that of European Capitalists.

We workers have naturally nothing to hope for from the Bourgeoisie; that is why we appeal to you, comrades, to demand from your Governments the raising of the blockade of Russia. Now that the English, French and Italian Proletariats have decided on united action, the Bourgeoisie will have to give way. The young revolutionary movement in Argentina is in a peculiar position, and the sacrifices which we have been called upon to make are not justified by the results. We wish to return to Russia, not because we want to abandon revolutionary propaganda, but because we think that several thousand Russian workers will do more good in Europe than here; Argentina depends entirely on Europe. As far as we know, the advanced Proletariat of Europe has done its utmost to promote the victory of the social revolution in Russia. And now, when the spark of the social revolution has developed into a European conflagration, when the victory of the Proletariat cannot be stayed, either by brute force, or by diplomacy, the time has come for action. Our efforts here have not yet met with success. Our vanguard is weak, and the enemy is strong, and his strength he derives from Europe.

Comrades, we beg of you to enable us to join you in your fight, instead of languishing in the prisons of the Argentine and other South American Republics.

We welcome your fight against the predatory plans of the world Bourgeoisie in regard to Russia, and wish you success in your future struggles!

Yours fraternally,
For the Federation,
A. TETISKI, *Secretary.*
T. N. KHODPISKI, *Treasurer.*
Buenos Aires, July 8th, 1919.

STOPPING THE PEACE PARTIES.

The working women of London have been giving Peace parties to the children. Each street organised its own party to include all the children living therein No one in the street has a room large enough to accommodate the children. Public halls are expensive and unsuitable in the lovely summer weather; parks and open spaces are often far away, so the mothers have held their parties for the children in their own streets, and, week by week, the parties have grown more and more splendid till the streets have become transformed; pavements have been arched by a green arcading, rose festoons have been twined about the lamp posts, platforms have been erected, choirs have sung, and races and games have been organised.

The Police Commissioner, however, desires to put an end to it: he "cannot countenance the obstruction of public thoroughfares by festivities of this nature." Royal processions are different, of course. It is true that the peace parties are held in dingy little back streets, where few vehicles ever pass; whilst the Royal processions hold up the traffic in the main thoroughfares for several hours and inconvenience many thousands of people. The peace parties are awaking the people of the back streets to organise and co-operate in a way they have never done before; they are bringing an unknown gaiety and brightness into dismal places, whilst the tawdry expensive pomp of a Royal procession is something merely to gape at and gives genuine pleasure to no one. It is true that the Royal processions are very costly to the people. But the peace parties are teaching the people to exercise their own initiative and the Royal processions teach them reverence to the "upper classes." On Saturday, August 23rd, a peace party to 120 children, in a quiet thoroughfare—Alfreston-street, Old Kent Road—was interrupted by the police, who ordered the removal of the pianos and stopped the concert.

The mothers who have organised further parties will not submit without trouble, we think.

IRELAND AS USUAL.

In the week ending August 2nd the political events were 8 arrests, 5 sentences, 3 armed assaults by police and military, 4 suppressions and proclamations, 15 courts martial trials, and 7 raids.

SPIES AND SPY PLOTS.

Ex-Inspector Syme writes to say that Major St. John Rowlandson, to whom he gave an undertaking at Bow Street, is not connected with the police, and gave his word of honour that he is not a Government official. Inspector Syme says the six months' undertaking he gave to Major Rowlandson was not the cause of his release. He adds that Mr. Maurice Facey was arrested one day and released the next and that Major Rowlandson had nothing to do with his release.

W. Paradise, of the Willesden Branch of the Building Workers' Industrial Union, writes to complain of the attacks made by official Labour on W. F. Watson, who is in prison and unable to defend himself. W. Paradise says he is also a member of the London Workers' Committee and has found Watson to be honest and upright in his actions and views.

"THE PLEBS MAGAZINE."

This issue of the *Plebs Magazine*, which is increased to 24 pages, contains articles by T. Bell (Editor, *The Socialist*), Mark Stair, W. Leonard (Sec., Scottish Labour College), Eden and Cedar Paul, T. A. Jackson (*Plebs* Lecturer, Leeds), Winifred Horrabin, etc., etc. *The Plebs* is determined to be a really adequate worker-students' review.

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LONDON MEETINGS—OUTDOOR.

These are meetings to protest against Intervention in Russia.

FRIDAY, AUG. 29th.
The Square, Woolwich, (12 noon) Melvina Walker.

SATURDAY, AUG. 20th.
Outside Jones' Bros., Holloway Road, 7 p.m. Minnie Birch, Melvina Walker, Ph. Edmunds, and others.

SUNDAY, AUG. 21st.
Osborn St., Whitechapel—11.45 a.m., Melvina Walker.
Dock Gates, Poplar—7.30 p.m., Walter Ponder, J.W.Kennedy. Chair: Melvina Walker

FRIDAY, SEPT. 25th.
Tower Hill (12 noon) Melvina Walker.

SATURDAY, SEPT. 6th.
Lewisham Market, 7 p.m.

INDOOR.

MONDAY, SEPT. 2nd.
20, Railway St. 7.30 p.m., — Poplar W.S.F. Business meeting. 8.30 p.m. Reading Circle.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 5th.
400, Old Ford Rd.—7.30 p.m. Dancing.

OTHER ORGANISATIONS.
East London Workers' Committee.

SUNDAY, AUG. 31st.
Victoria Park, 12 (noon) W. Ponder and others.

TUESDAY, SEPT. 2nd.
Queen's Road, corner of Dalston Lane, 7.30 p.m., Walter Ponder and others.

THURSDAY, SEPT. 4th.
400, Old Ford Rd.—7.30 p.m., Business meeting.

TUESDAY, SEPT. 2nd.
Walthamstow League of Rights, William Morris Hall, Somers Rd.— 3 p.m. Miss Stephenson.

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